

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 LUSAKA 00522 01 OF 02 201025Z  
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W  
-----102711 201031Z /20

O P 200918Z FEB 78  
FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7660  
INFO AMCONSUL CAPETOWN PRIORITY  
USINTERESTS HAVANA PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY GABORONE PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY LAGOS PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY LILONGWE PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 LUSAKA 0522

EXDIS

CAPETOWN FOR EMBASSY

USUN FOR AMB YOUNG

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PDEV RH UK  
SUBJECT: RHODESIA: REFLECTIONS ON THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT AND  
THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSAL

1. FOLLOWING ARE EMBASSY REFLECTIONS ON THE CURRENT SITUATION.  
AS WE SEE IT, OUR BROAD OBJECTIVE IN RHODESIA IS AN  
EARLY NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT WHICH WILL PERMIT ORDERLY  
PROGRESS TOWARDS MAJORITY RULE AND INDEPENDENCE IN THE  
COUNTRY. IT SHOULD MAKE NO DIFFERENCE TO THE U.S.  
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PAGE 02 LUSAKA 00522 01 OF 02 201025Z

WHETHER THIS IS ACHIEVED UNDER THE ANGLO-AMERICAN  
PROPOSAL (AAP), AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT, OR SOME OTHER  
ARRANGEMENTS

2. A. THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT. IF THE NEGOTIATIONS  
NOW GOING ON IN SALISBURY WERE TO PRODUCE AN ELECTED  
BLACK GOVERNMENT IN THE NEAR FUTURE, IT IS POSSIBLE THAT

SUCH A GOVERNMENT MIGHT ATTRACT SUBSTANTIAL SUPPORT NOT ONLY FROM ZIMBABWEANS IN AND OUTSIDE OF THE COUNTRY, BUT FROM A NUMBER OF AFRICAN COUNTRIES. ALTERNATIVELY, IF SMITH WERE TO RESIGN AND LEAVE THE INTERIM PERIOD IN THE HANDS OF A COLITION OF BLACKS AND WHITES, PERHAPS EVEN WITH A WHIT PRIME MINISTER, SIGNIFICANT SUPPORT MIGHT BE GENERATED. AS WE UNDERSTAND IT, NEITHER OF THESE TWO POSSIBILITIES ARE UNDER SERIOUS CONSIDERATION IN SALISBURY. WE APPARENTLY HAVE TO GO THROUGH A YEAR OR MORE UNDER SMITH, INCLUDING A WHITE AND PERHAPS BLACK REFERENDUM AND WHAT WILL CLEARLY BE A HOTLY CONTESTED ELECTION, BEFORE A BLACK AFRICAN GOVERNMENT TAKES OVER. THIS PERIOD WILL PROVIDE AN INVITATION TO THE PATRIOTIC FRONT TO INTENSIFY ITS MILITARY ACTIVITY, ACTIVITY WHICH WE BELIEVE WILL BE STRONGLY SUPPORTED BY BOTH THE SOVIETS AND CUBANS AND ACQUIESCED IN BY ZAMBIA AND MOZAMBIQUE. IT IS OUR IMPRESSION, FURTHERMORE, THAT THE RHODESIANS WILL SHOW LESS INHIBITION THAN HITHERTO ABOUT RETALIATIO INTO ZAMBIA, PARTICULARLY IF THEIR INTERIM REGIME CONTAINS A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF BLACKS. THE PROSPECT IS ANYTHING BUT ONE OF ORDERLY PROGRESS TO MAJORITY RULE. IT IS LIKELY TO RESULT IN A RADICALIZATION OF THE PF AND, OVER TIME, A WEAKENING OF THE MODERATE BLACK LDEADERSHIP INSIDE RHODESIA WITH INCREASING AUTHORITY BEING ASSUMED BY BLACK ELEMENTS OF THE RHODESIAN DEFENSE FORCES, IT WILL ALSO BRING A MARKED INCREASE IN SOVIET/CUBAN INFLUENCE IN ZAMBIA AND MOZAMBIQUE. CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 LUSAKA 00522 01 OF 02 201025Z

3. THE POSSIBILITQ OF NKOMO OR MUGABE JOINING THE INTEPNAL PROCE&S SEEMS TO US REMOTE. IF EITHER OF THEM WERE DISPOSED TO CHANCE THEIR FATE TO AN ELECTION UNDER AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT THEY WOULD, IT SEEMS TO US, MUCH PREFER TO DO SO UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE AAP WHICH IS LIKELY TO BE MORE IMPARTIAL THAN A SMITH INTERIM GOVERNMENT AND WHICH PROVIDES A PLACE FOR THEIR ARMED FORCES. ONLY IF THERE WERE TO BE SOME KIND OF DEAL WORKED OUT BETEEN SMITH AND THE PF AND THE INTERNAL NATIONALISTS (A GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNITY) IS IT CONCEIVABLE THAT THEY MIGHT AGREE TO RETURN. IN PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES, SUCH A DEAL APPERAS TO US TO BE EXTREMELY UNLIKELY. THE PF (NKOMO/AAPU) IS BOLSTERED BY PROMISES OF SUPPORT FOR A TOTAL VICTORY FROM THE SOVIETS AND BELIEVES IT CAN CONTINUE TO COUNT ON ZAMBIA AND MOZAMBIQUE. THE INTERNAL NATIONALISTS SEE THEMSELVES COMING OUT ON TOP IN AN ELECTION. A BASIS FOR COMPROMISE, THEREFORE, DOES NOT EXIST AT THE PRESENT TIME. ONLY IF THE MILITARY SITUATION WERE TO WORSEN AND THEN TURN INTO A STALEMATE WOULD SUCH A DEAL BECOME A LIKELY POSSIBILITY.

4. B.THE AAP. PROSPECTS FOR EVENTUAL ACCEPTANCE OF THE AAP BY THE VARIOUS PARTIES ARE NOT GOOD AT THE MOMENT. TO BE FRANK, IT HAS FEW SUPPORTERS AMONG THE CONTESTING PARTIES. ONLY THE FRONTLINE SEES IT AS A REASONABLE WAY OUT AND NONE OF THE FL STATES HAS SO FAR SHOWN A WILLINGNESS TO PRESS THE CONTESTANTS HARD IN ITS SUPPORT. IN A SITUATION LIKE THIS ONE, HOWEVER, WE HAVE FOUND THAT ALMOST ANYTHING CAN AND USUALLY DOES HAPPEN. THERE IS GREAT FLUIDITY AS BETWEEN THE POSITIONS AND THE PARTIES. THEIR VIEWS AND ALLIANCES ARE CONSTANTLY CHANGING. THEREFORE, THERE IS MUCH TO BE SAID FOR KEEPING THE AAP AROUND. SOMETHING IS LIKELY TO HAPPEN IN THE NEXT WEEK OR MONTH WHICH WILL AGAIN THRUST IT FORWARD AS THE BEST AND MOST PRACTICAL BASIS FOR A SOLUTION. IN THE MEANTIME, WE CAN  
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PAGE 04 LUSAKA 00522 01 OF 02 201025Z

FOLLOW TWO RATHER DIFFERENT COURSES OF ACTION.

5. (1) PRESS FOR GREATER SUPPORT FOR THE AAP. WHILE THE SALISBURY TALKS ARE GOING ON, THERE IS LITTLE POSSIBILITY OF GETTING THE PARTICIPANTS THERE TO DECLARE FURTHER SUPPORT

FOR THE AAP. IN OUR VIEW, ONE OF THE MAJOR REASONS WHY THE AAP HAS NOT BEEN SUCCESSFUL IS THE INTRANSIGENCE OF THE PF TOWARDS IT. THE PF'S REFUSAL TO ENTER INTO SERIOUS DISCUSSIONS OVER THE PLAN'S PROVISIONS UNTIL MALTA AND ITS INSISTENCE THAT THE PLAN WAS ACCEPTABLE ONLY ON ITS OWN TERMS WHICH WOULD RESULT IN ITS DOMINATING THE TRANSITION PERIOD LEFT SMITH AND THE INTERNAL NATIONALISTS WITH LITTLE CHOICE BUT TO TRY TO WORK OUT THEIR OWN PROPOSAL. IT WAS ONLY THEN THAT THE PF AGREED EVEN TO DISCUSS THE MATTER. IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT WE WILL HAVE LEVERAGE WITH THE PF ONLY AS LONG AS IT GENUINELY FEARS THAT THE SALISBURY TALKS MAY SUCCEED IN PRODUCING A REASONABLE COMPROMISE WHICH WOULD BE WIDELY SUPPORTED INSIDE RHODESIA. THE MORE DIFFICULT THE SALISBURY NEGOTIATIONS BECOME, THE LESS THE CHANCES OF GETTING THE PF TO SIGN UP TO WHAT WE ARE PROPOSING, BECAUSE IT WILL SEE ITS CHANCES OF GETTING ITS OWN WAY EITHER THROUGH NEGOTIATION OR MILITARY ACTION AS BEING STRENGTHENED. FURTHERMORE, THE FL MAY BE MORE WILLING TO PRESS THE PF TO TAKE A REASONABLE STANCE WHILE THE SALISBURY TALKS ARE IN FULL SWING AND THREATENING TO PRODUCE A RESULT THE FL FEARS.

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PAGE 01 LUSAKA 00522 02 OF 02 201038Z  
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FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7661  
INFO AMCONSUL CAPETOWN PRIORITY  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 LUSAKA 0522/2

EXDIS

CAPETOWN FOR EMBASSY

USUN FOR AMB YOUNG

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PDEV RH UK  
SUBJECT: RHODESIAC REFLECTIONS ON THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT AND  
THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSAL

6. TO PUSH THE PROPOSALS AT THIS TIME, WE COULD DO A  
NUMBER OF THINGS:

(A) WE COULD PRESS MUGABE AND NKOMO INDIVIDUALLY AND  
DIRECTLY AS FOR INSTANCE WHEN MUGABE COMES TO THE STATES.  
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PAGE 02 LUSAKA 00522 02 OF 02 201038Z

ANDY YOUNG COULD WRITE NKOMO, OR WE COULD SUGGEST THAT HE  
VISIT NEW YORK.

(B) WE COULD ADDRESS THE FL EITHER THROUGH A HIGH LEVEL  
LETTER OR AN EMISSARY URGING THEM TO PRESS THE PF TO  
ACCEPT THE PLAN IN ORDER TO PROVIDE A REASONABLE ALTERNATIVE

TO THE CIVIL WAR THEY ALL WISH TO AVOID.

(C) WE COULD, AND IN OUR VIEW SHOULD UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES, MAKE CLEAR IN DIPLOMATIC EXCHANGES AND MEDIA BRIEFINGS THAT THE PF'S INTRASIGENCE ON TRANSITION PERIOD ARRANGEMENTS IS KEEPING US FROM MOVING AHEAD JUST AS MUCH AS THE SALISBURY TALKS.

(D) WE COULD AGREE TO FORMAL TALKS WITH THE PF AT LORD CARVER'S LEVEL TO TRY TO HAMMER OUT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN US. THE BRITISH MAY RESIST THIS FOR THE TIME BEING BUT WE SHOULD CERTAINLY GIVE IT VERY SERIOUS CONSIDERATION.

7. THE REAL DANGER OF SUCH A COURSE OF ACTION IS THAT IT MIGHT SUCCEED. IF THE PF WERE TO AGREE TO A REASONABLE SET OF ARRANGEMENTS FOR A TRANSITION PERIOD WHICH SATISFIED OUR INSISTENCE ON IMPARTIALITY AMONG THE NATIONALISTS ORGANIZATIONS, IT AND THE FL WOULD THEN INSIST THAT WE TAKE MEASURES TO SEE THAT THE PROPOSAL IS ACCEPTED IN SALISBURY. IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT INDEED FOR US TO SIMPLY SIT BACK AND WAIT FOR THE SALISBURY TALKS TO RUN INTO A SNAG, BUT NO ONE IS UNDER ANY ILLUSIONS ABOUT THE OBSTACLES WE WOULD BE FACING AT HOME TO PRESENTING OUR PROPOSAL IN FORCEFUL TERMS IN PRETORIA AND SALISBURY WHILE THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT IS STILL A POSSIBILITY. THIS IS NOT SOMETHING WE CAN WEIGH IN LUSAKA, BUT FROM OUR VIEWPOINT HERE, IT IS THE ONLY DIRECTION WHICH PROVIDES ANY CHANGE FOR A CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 LUSAKA 00522 02 OF 02 201038Z

NEGOTIATED AND ORDERLY PATH TO A SOLUTION IN ZIMBABWE.

8. (2) LEAVE THE AAP ON THE TABLE. THE ALTERNATIVE TO THE ABOVE COURSE OF ACTION IS TO COMPLETE OUR PROPOSALS, PUBLISH THEM IN THE FORM OF A LETTER TO THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE UN AND TO SAY WE HAVE DONE WHAT WE COULD. WHEN AND IF THE PARTIES WISH TO RETURN TO WHAT WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE IS THE BEST SOLUTION, WE ARE PREPARED TO HELP IMPLEMENT IT, WE COULD MAKE CLEAR TO THE PF AND FL THAT WE BELIEVE IT REMAINS THE PF'S CONTINUING DEMANDS TO DOMINATE THE TRANSITION PROCESS WHICH STANDS IN THE WAY OF A SETTLEMENT BASED ON THE AAP. SUCH A COURSE WOULD SPARE US CRITICISM DOMESTICALLY IN THE UK AND US. IT IS AN HONEST COURSE IN VIEW OF THE ESSENTIAL REJECTIONS WE HAVE RECEIVED FROM THE PARTICIPANTS ON BOTH SIDES, BUT IN OUR VIEW IT HAS TWO MAJOR DRAWBACKS: FIRST, UNLESS WE PRESS THE AAP NOW, ITS CHANCES OF EVER BEING ACCEPTED BY EITHER SIDE ARE VERY SMALL. WITHOUT IT AS AN ALTERNATIVE, WE SEE THE LIKELIHOOD OF GREATLY INCREASED MILITARY ACTIVITY, WHETHER OR NOT THE INTERNAL TALKS IN SALISBURY ARE SUCCESSFUL, WITH ALL THE CONSEQUENCES WHICH SUCH ACTIVITY

WILL BRING WITH IT (PARA 3). SECOND WE BELIEVE THAT THE  
FL STATES IN PARTICULAR AND MANY OTHER AFRICANS THROUGH THE  
OAU WILL SOON BE CONVINCED OF THE BIG LIE THAT THIS WAS A  
RESULT WE HAD ALL ALONG BEEN AIMING FOR--AN INTERNAL  
SETTLEMENT WAS REALLY WHAT THE US AND UK SOUGHT. MUCH OF  
THE BENEFIT OR OUR IMPROVED RELATIONS OVER THE LAST  
EIGHT MONTHS WOULD BE LOST.  
LOW

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 20 feb 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
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**Disposition History:** n/a  
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**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014